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WFBandy

3 October 1955

~~Statement of CIA Position Concerning Exchanges  
of Documentary Materials and Exhibits with the USSR~~

1. In this broad field, in contrast to the situation in the exchange-of-persons area, the US almost certainly has more to gain from fuller exchange than the USSR, not only (though perhaps foremost) from an intelligence standpoint, but also from the standpoint of world-wide propaganda impact and conceivably influence on the USSR. The essentials of the present situation are that the Soviets can get most of what they want here, from a government standpoint, while controlling or barring the entrance of materials they do not want to have their people read; conversely, the US cannot obtain a great deal that it wants from a government standpoint, while the internal security drawbacks to fuller admission of Soviet materials, except in special cases of outright propaganda, appear to be not substantial.

2. Since the situation is thus broadly different from that in the exchange-of-persons field, it follows that the US should make maximum use of Soviet proposals in the latter, in order to extract US advantages in the materials field. This has been stated in the position paper on exchanges of persons and is underlined here, together with the vital operating corollary that negotiations to obtain materials must make this a pre-condition of a proposed visit, sealed beyond possibility of misunderstanding before delegations actually depart in either direction.

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3. We believe that at Geneva the US can safely and profitably take a position in favor of fuller exchange of materials, highlighting the extent of the Iron Curtain to the maximum possible degree. At the same time the US should seek to put forward as many proposals as possible on a case-by-case basis, after examination of their net advantage to the US under the same categories applicable to the exchange of persons:

- a. Positive intelligence gain to the US or USSR.
- b. Technological gain to either. <sup>1</sup>
- c. Defection or counter-intelligence gain.
- d. Propaganda gain (in a broad or narrow sense).

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- 1 It must be expected that the Soviets will call attention to practical controls now exercised by the US over the entry of certain types of propaganda material. Nonetheless, it should be possible to make clear that Soviet controls are infinitely tighter than our own, and in no fair sense can the US be said to be maintaining an Iron Curtain.
- 2 Defection and counter-intelligence may appear to be little affected by anything in the materials field. However, any broadening of our knowledge of Soviet personalities particularly in key intellectual fields (e.g. writers of dissertations tending to differ from accepted "lines") adds to our capital in this field, so that the point cannot be disregarded. Moreover, exchanges of exhibits would also involve accompanying personnel directly.

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4. It seems unlikely that any details for fuller exchange in this field can be completed at Geneva, and it should be noted that some standing contacts with the Soviet Government exist, notably through the Library of Congress, for the exchange of publications. These channels could profitably be used for working out the details of exchanges agreed to in principle. It should further be noted, however, that the US Government is not now fully organized to handle continuing exchanges in all fields. In addition to the activity of the Library of Congress relating to publications, the Office of Strategic Information (OSI) - established in the Department of Commerce pursuant to NSC 5427 - is serving as a coordinating body for the release of US government materials. However, OSI has no jurisdiction in other fields, so that it is not in a position, for example, to take advantage of Soviet desire for hard-to-get publications by obtaining a favorable (and probably relatively ~~more~~ favorable quid pro quo). Hence, the US Government should give consideration to the creation of either a central point (perhaps in the State Department) or an interdepartmental committee in close touch with the situation, to carry on a continuing process of bargaining with the USSR.

5. Classification and Pre-Publication Control. Under present circumstances, the US should certainly make no change in the existing criteria in these respects but should if anything seek to tighten the controls on publication of information, since fuller exchanges would make material, once published, all the more likely to become known to the Soviets.

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Effective classification and pre-publication control practices should serve not only to deny information to the Soviets, as an end in itself, but also to increase US bargaining leverage. (That is, Soviet inquiries would stimulate negotiation, even though the US did not in the end furnish any classified information in response to such inquiries but did rather seek to meet them through unclassified materials.)

Specific Possible Areas for Fuller Exchange

6. Publications. It is necessary to consider the publications of both private sources and the government on the US side since on the Soviet side there is no useful dividing line between the two. The present situation is that private publications are theoretically fully available to the Soviets to the extent that they are commercially available; where they are obtainable through direct request only, a vestige of control exists through the voluntary cooperation of the private persons involved, who may seek advice from OSI. Unclassified US Government materials are subject to the OSI controls laid down by NSC 5427, although there remains a substantial potential "leakage" through the frequent commercial availability of such publications. Although the US ability to withhold publications thus appears extremely limited in theory, the recent attempts by the Soviets to obtain, under standing arrangements with the Library of Congress, materials which they could in fact have had, roughly, in any book store, suggests that the Soviets are not in practice sufficiently familiar with the situation or expert in their procurement to take full advantage. Thus, the US does have substantial leverage in this field and can use Soviet desire for additional materials

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in order to procure at least a measure of additional Soviet releases . . . Publications procurement work in Moscow has shown a substantial increase in results within the past year, with the "take" rising some 50% by volume and also substantially in quality. This may reflect general Soviet easing, or conceivably a desire to further their own requests on the US, but it should be noted that as things stand the Soviets can turn the faucet on and off very rapidly, as they have done in the past . . . As to specific categories of publications:

a. Books: Fuller procurement of Soviet books would have intelligence value that would be substantial for technical publications, probably much less significant for other material. Little technological gain to the US could be expected. From a general propaganda standpoint a very much fuller flow of US books to the USSR (such flow now being highly controlled) would appear to have very great advantage while the intelligence and technological gains to the USSR would be insignificant.

b. Catalogues and Bibliographical Material: Although we have recently had some valuable acquisitions through semi-overt procurement methods, the US would make substantial gains from fuller procurement of Soviet material in this category. The Soviets might make some gains from a more complete procurement of US materials, but the net advantage would appear to lie on the US side.

c. Periodicals and Newspapers: The US would get substantial intelligence gains from a much wider availability in this category, particularly in such areas as the provincial press. A full listing of desirable periodicals is attached as Annex A.\*

\* Mr. Rover: Annex A to contain FIO's listing of periodicals, already conveyed informally to State.



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Some care would have to be exercised that in the resulting exchanges the USSR did not seek to introduce substantial propaganda specifically directed at the US, but barring this the net advantage would again appear to lie on the US side.

d. Technical Publications in Economic and Industrial Fields. In these areas the existing procurement is reasonably adequate, and any additional materials would be likely to contain comparatively little of intelligence value. (They would clearly be far less valuable than statistical material discussed in the preceding paragraph.) Soviet desire for US materials, on the other hand, as demonstrated, for example, in the curiosity of the Soviet agricultural delegation for bibliographical and commercially available secondary materials, might be used as leverage by the US.

e. Technical Publications in Scientific Fields. In this area, by contrast, the US procures only an estimated 40 - 60% of Soviet publications that are known to exist and appear to be of potential intelligence value. Since Soviet propaganda has made much of alleged US interference with the free flow of scientific interchange while extolling their own asserted liberality, the US should seek to expose the Soviet controls to the maximum, and to force the USSR into the position of maintaining them only at substantial expense to its propaganda effort.

f. Monographs and Dissertations. The US obtains almost no materials of this type, and there are many indications that such material would be of considerable intelligence value. The Soviets, on the other hand, are at least able to learn of the existence of most US monographs and dissertations.

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and to obtain most of these upon request. (S): Please check this.<sup>7</sup> Hence, it should be to net US advantage to pursue this category.

7. Official Government Statistical and other Figures and Reports

In this area, taken alone, the US enjoys little bargaining leverage because of the great variety of statistical information freely disseminated by the US Government, whereas the Soviets release comparatively little comparable information. In the economic field particularly, Soviet statistical material could be of very great intelligence value, much more than publications in this field.\* The most effective US lever to obtain such information would appear to lie in bargaining concerning exchanges of persons. The UN aspect should also be stressed.

8. Patents. In this field, US patents (other than those classified from their inception) are substantially available to a considerable degree to the Soviets either by inquiry in Washington (now subject to OSI control) or through their availability in major Western nations, notably the UK and France, with which the US has patent agreements. On the other hand, the US has no access to Soviet patents as such and very little access to comparable information on inventions. Hence, fuller exchange would be greatly in US interest.

9. Exhibits. Proposals for the exchange of exhibits will, of course, vary greatly and should be examined with special rigor. The intelligence value of materials sent by the Soviets is not likely to be substantial, although it may be possible, through semi-overt methods, to obtain technical/markings of

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\* It is recognized, of course, that Soviet statistical material may be slanted or even falsified. However, proper evaluation will usually reveal such tendencies, which then become an intelligence fact of significance in themselves.

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some importance. Possible Soviet technological gains should be watched with care. However, the kind of proposals they are likely to make or to which they would be receptive would appear to require examining from a general propaganda standpoint rather than either intelligence or technological. Such proposals as an exhibit related to peaceful uses of the atom, text book exhibits, journalism exhibits, etc., would appear to have substantial to the US propaganda advantage/. In any proposal the CIA interest and the possibilities of purchase or clandestine uses should be considered.